

Charles W. Murphy
Chairman



Tom Iron
Vice Chairman

Sharon Two Bears
Secretary

DISTRICTS

Carol White Eagle
Cannonball District

Verna Bailey
Long Soldier District

Milo Cadotte
Wakpala District

Frank White Bull
Kenel District

Avis Little Eagle
Bear Soldier District

Milton Brown Otter
Rock Creek District

Donel Takes The Gun
Running Antelope District

Randal White Sr.
Porcupine District

AT LARGE

Jesse Taken Alive

Mike Claymore

Archie Fool Bear

Matt Lopez

Alma J. Mentz

Jesse McLaughlin

May 02, 2005

The Honorable Byron Dorgan
Senate Select on Indian Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Dorgan,

I am requesting this statement be included as part of the record for the field hearing by the senate committee of the Indian Affairs regarding the suicides occurring on the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation.

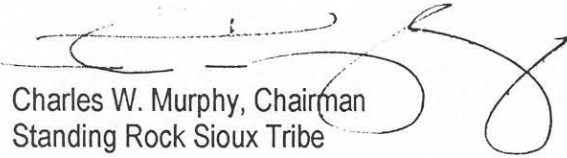
This April 27th and April 28th, 2005 the Tribe sponsored a youth conference here on Standing Rock, during which a survey was conducted with the youth in attendance. We received (250) responses from youth who attend area schools. They were students from grades 7th thru 12th. The questions asked were "why are youth harming themselves" and "what can be done to help youth in crisis". The responses highlighted areas where services are not adequately available here at Standing Rock, areas the Tribe also has concerns of deficient services. Currently, the Indian Health Services Mental Health program is the primary provider of these services and I.H.S. does not have enough qualified staff to meet the needs of families. Assessment of families accurately is critical, there will be a vacancy of one of two who are able to conduct the assessment, leaving (1) psychologist and (3) mental health workers for the entire reservation. The case load of the limited staff exceed (100) per worker which only leave time for crisis management.

The Chemical prevention program is another area of need, as there is (1) youth wellness position to provide services to the entire reservation, evaluation and treatment concerns are critical in addressing mental health issues.

I have attached a synopsis of the (4) major areas of need reflected by the youth survey along with their view of what would assist the families in crisis. The youth have valuable insight and want to be heard. A draft budget is attached with recommendations to improve the mental health services.

On behalf of the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe I would like to express our sincere appreciation of your efforts in helping us address this critical issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a series of loops and a long horizontal stroke, positioned above the printed name.

Charles W. Murphy, Chairman
Standing Rock Sioux Tribe

Youth Survey Synopsis:

“Why are youth harming themselves?”

1. Youth are not being heard when they need help.
2. Mental health issues included, depression, feeling of hopelessness, and grief
3. Alcohol and Drug Abuse
4. Parent/Child conflicts, no communication

“What are your ideas for assisting youth in crisis?”

1. Listen to the youth
2. Counseling for children and families
3. Peer Mentoring
4. Youth activities, involving youth in planning for event.

Funds Request of \$500,000 per year for the following:

- Professional services, contract with a psychologist or psychiatrist to provide assessments and/or provide treatment or referral for intensive patient needs.
- Out reach workers, staff who will go into the homes and provide follow up services. This could include transportation to services as this is the main barrier to continuation of treatment needs.
- Additional funds for the Chemical Prevention Program, youth and adult services